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To:

U.S. Patent and Trademark Office

Examiner:

V. Vu

Art Unit:

2154

Fax. No.:

703-872-9306

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From:

John C. Gorecki

Date:

February 4, 2004

Number of pages including this cover sheet: 14

Applicant:

Shank, et al.

Examiner:

V. Vu

Serial No.:

09/223,972

Art Unit:

2154

Filed:

12/31/1998

Attorney Docket No.: HU0125

Title:

2/31/1996 Attorney Docker

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Attached are the following papers:

- Transmittal Letter (1 page in duplicate)
- Reply to Office Action (11 pages)

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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

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CERTIFICATE OF FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION

I hereby certify that this document, along with any other papers perferred to as being attached or enclosed, is being

Transmitted via Facsimile to (703) 872-9306 on February 4, 2004.

John C. Gorecki, Reg. No. 38,471

M.S. Non-fee Amendment Commissioner for Patents P.O. Box 1450 Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

TRANSMITTAL LETTER

Transmitted herewith is a Reply in the above-identified application. The fee has been calculated and is transmitted as shown below:

	Number of Claims Remaining After Amendment	Highest Number of Claims previously paid for	Number of Extra Claims Present	Rate	Additional Fcc
Total Claims	16	20	0	x \$18.00	\$0
Independent Claims	3	3	0	x 86.00	\$0
Multiple Dependent Claims (check if applicable)					\$0
TOTAL ADDITIONAL FEES FOR THIS AMENDMENT					\$0.00

No fees are believed due in connection with this filing. If any fees are due, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge payment of the fees associated with this communication or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 502246 (Ref. NN-HU0125). A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.

Respectfully Submitted

Dated: February 4, 2004

John C. Gorecki

Registration No. 38,471

John C. Gorecki, Esq.

Patent Attorney 165 Harvard St.

Newton, MA 02460

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PAGE 04/14

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REPLY

Dear Sir:

Applicants respond to the Office Action dated November 4, 2003, as follows:

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS are reflected in the listing of claims which begins on page 2 of this paper.

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS begin on page 6 of this paper.